

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

**Please amend the claims as follows:**

1. (Currently Amended) A piping connector for connecting a first pipe and a second pipe, said connector comprising:

a socket having a tubular shape attachable to an end of the first pipe to be connected;

a plug having a tubular shape attachable to an end of the second pipe;

a seal ring arranged at an inner periphery of the socket for sealing an interval between the inner periphery of the socket and an outer periphery of the plug in an airtight manner; and

a hold ring fixedly attached to the inner periphery of the socket for restricting the seal ring from moving in an axial direction,

wherein the first pipe and the second pipe are connectable by inserting the plug to fit to the socket; and

~~wherein the hold ring includes a groove, having a ring-like shape for constituting a burr storing space, at an outer periphery of the holding ring, the holding ring being welded to the inner periphery of the socket by ultrasonic welding, said groove being disposed so as to create a space between the hold ring and the inner periphery of the socket.~~

wherein the hold ring comprises:

a first end portion that faces toward the seal ring and that is fitted to the inner periphery of the socket;

a second end portion that is positioned opposite to the first end portion and that is fitted to the inner periphery of the socket; and

a groove that is formed between the first end portion and the second end

portion, and

wherein the groove of the hold ring and the inner periphery of the socket define a space therebetween so that, when the hold ring is welded, a burr is confined within the space.

2. (Original) The piping connector according to Claim 1, wherein in the ultrasonic welding, a portion of the hold ring pressed to the inner periphery of the socket is constituted by a corner portion faced in a curved shape having a radius of curvature of 0.2 through 0.5mm.
3. (Previously Presented) The piping connector according to Claim 1, wherein the inner periphery of the socket is provided with a first diameter contracted portion and a second diameter contracted portion from a side of an inserting port of the plug, the hold ring is pressed to the first diameter contracted portion to weld, and a stepped portion for constituting a stopper and a burr stopper in welding the hold ring is formed between the first diameter contracted portion and the second diameter contracted portion.
4. (Canceled)
5. (Previously Presented) The piping connector according to Claim 1, wherein a portion of the hold ring pressed to the inner periphery of the socket includes a corner portion having a curved shape with a radius of curvature of 0.2 through 0.5mm.
6. (Previously Presented) The piping connector according to Claim 1, wherein the inner

periphery of the socket comprises:

- a first diameter contracted portion;
- a second diameter contracted portion; and
- a stepped portion formed between the first diameter contracted portion and the second diameter contracted portion.

7. (Previously Presented) The piping connector according to Claim 1, wherein said groove comprises a V shape.

8. (Previously Presented) The piping connector according to Claim 1, wherein said holding ring comprises:

- a large diameter portion; and
- a small diameter portion adjacent to the large diameter portion.

9. (Previously Presented) The piping connector according to Claim 8, wherein said groove is formed between said large diameter portion and said small diameter portion.

10. (Previously Presented) The piping connector according to Claim 8, wherein said groove is formed at an outer periphery of said large diameter portion, and said small diameter portion is formed at an end of said groove.

11. (Previously Presented) The piping connector according to Claim 1, wherein said groove comprises a wall portion having a tapered shape.

12. (Previously Presented) The piping connector according to Claim 8, wherein said groove comprises a wall portion having a tapered shape extending from a bottom portion of said groove to said small diameter portion.

13. (Previously Presented) The piping connector according to Claim 1, wherein a portion of the hold ring pressed to the inner periphery of the socket includes a corner portion having a curved shape with a radius of curvature sufficient to not disperse vibration energy generated by said ultrasonic welding.

14. (Previously Presented) The piping connector according to Claim 8, wherein said large diameter portion comprises an outer diameter substantially matched to an inner periphery of an inner portion of said socket.

15. (Previously Presented) The piping connector according to Claim 8, wherein said small diameter portion comprises an outer diameter substantially matched to an inner periphery of an inner portion of said socket.

16. (Previously Presented) The piping connector according to Claim 1, further comprising a stopper member mounted on said socket.

17. (Previously Presented) The piping connector according to Claim 16, wherein said stopper member comprises a bent wire member.

18. (Previously Presented) The piping connector according to Claim 1, wherein said plug comprises a position projection formed on an outer periphery of said plug.

19. (Previously Presented) The piping connector according to Claim 1, wherein said socket comprises a position projection formed on an outer periphery of said socket.

20. (Currently Amended) A piping connector for connecting a first pipe to a second pipe, said piping connector comprising:

a socket attachable to an end of the first pipe;

a plug attachable to an end of the second pipe; and

a hold ring fixedly attached to an inner periphery of the socket,

wherein the hold ring comprises:

a first end portion that is fitted to the inner periphery of the socket;

a second end portion that is positioned opposite to the first end portion and that is fitted to the inner periphery of the socket; and

a groove that is formed between the first end portion and the second end portion, and

wherein the groove of the hold ring and the inner periphery of the socket define a space therebetween so that, when the hold ring is welded, a burr is confined within the space.

~~wherein said hold ring includes a groove at an outer periphery of the hold ring.~~

21. (Currently Amended) A piping connector for connecting a first pipe to a second pipe,

said piping connector comprising:

first connecting means attachable to an end of the first pipe;

second connecting means attachable to an end of the second pipe; and

holding means attached to an inner periphery of one of said first connecting means  
and said second connecting means,

wherein the holding means comprises:

a first end portion that is fitted to the inner periphery of the first connecting  
means;

a second end portion that is positioned opposite to the first end portion and that  
is fitted to the inner periphery of the first connecting means; and

a groove that is formed between the first end portion and the second end  
portion, and

wherein the groove of the holding means and the inner periphery of the first  
connecting means define a space therebetween so that, when the holding means is welded, a  
burr is confined within the space.

22. (Currently Amended) The piping connector according to claim 1, wherein in the  
~~ultrasonic~~ welding of the hold ring, a portion of the hold ring pressed to the inner periphery of  
the socket is constituted by a corner portion faced in a curved shape.